

Information for patients

Veterans' PREP Programme



Therapies

*Helping veterans before and
after knee replacement surgery*



What is the PREP Programme?

PREP means Prehabilitation and Recovery Enabling Potential. The Veterans' PREP programme at RJAH is for veterans. You will be invited to take part by the Veterans Doctor if you need a knee replacement.

Aims of the PREP Programme

- help you get ready for surgery.
- help you recover as well as possible after surgery.
- improve your health and wellbeing.
- learn how to make rehabilitation better for veterans in the future.

The PREP Programme

The programme includes:

- Information preparing for your surgery and for your recovery and rehabilitation afterwards.
- An online workshop to discuss your personal goals and questions or worries.
- A personalised 'pre-hab' programme that you work through before your surgery.
- Information about the surgery and what happens when you have the operation and a pre-operative assessment.
- After 5 to 8 weeks following your operation, you will come back to RJAH for a 5-day rehab stay. You will stay in a self-catering cottage on site.
- An ongoing personalised rehabilitation programme.
- A collection of measures to track your progress from before your surgery up to 12 months after your operation.
- Support from the Defence Medical Welfare Service (DMWS) officer throughout the programme.

Where:

- **At the hospital** – you will need to come for appointments with the Doctor and the team, pre-op checks, your surgery, intensive rehab, and for clinical measurements.
- **By phone** – to ask questions, for support straight after surgery on discharge home
- **By video call** – to meet other patients having the same surgery, to discuss your personalised programme, appointments with the team.
- **At home** – home exercise plans designed for you.
- **In your local community** – local exercise groups, swimming pool, walks etc.

You will have one-to-one appointments and small group sessions for rehabilitation.

How do you take part in the programme?

We will invite you to take part in the programme if:

1. You have served or are serving in the UK military inc. national service.
2. Your doctor has referred you to The Headley Court Veterans' Orthopaedic Centre at RJAH.
3. A Doctor at the Veterans Orthopaedic Service at RJAH has made the decision that you require a total knee replacement.
4. You are able to commit to visits to the hospital for appointments and clinical measurements.
5. You will be able to stay at a self-catering cottage onsite at the hospital with other people on the programme in the 5th to 8th week after your total knee replacement surgery for 5 days intensive rehab.
6. You have access to a device or know someone that can help you to watch hospital information and attend appointments online.
7. You are well enough and able to take part in rehab at home before your surgery and afterwards.

You won't be able to participate in the programme if:

- 1.** You are not a veteran.
- 2.** You haven't been seen by one of the Headley Court Veterans Orthopaedic Doctors or team.
- 3.** You don't require a total knee replacement.
- 4.** You require assistance for daily living and wouldn't be able to stay in self-catering cottage on site at the hospital on your own.
- 5.** You can't commit to attending appointments to complete all parts of the programme.

The programme

1. Getting started

The Doctor at the Veterans Orthopaedic Service will meet you and talk to you about your knee. They will discuss if they think you need a knee replacement.

If you do need a knee replacement you will then meet the therapy team. You will learn more about the Veterans' PREP Programme.

At this visit:

- You will have some general health screening with the nurse
- you will visit the gym
- we will take some measurements
- we will explain what will happen next

After this, we will contact you at home. We will send you information to read or watch. We will invite you to an online workshop. You can meet other veterans who will be having a knee replacement at the online workshop. We will answer questions and provide information. We will discuss your personal prehabilitation plan and your goals. You can invite your friends or family to come to the workshop online.

2. Prehabilitation before surgery

Before your operation, you will follow your own programme at home.

This may include:

- exercises at home, walking, class or gym exercises, swimming, aqua exercise
- information and learning
- support for your wellbeing

We will support you along the way and keep in touch.

3. Surgery

Your knee replacement surgery will take place as a same-day procedure. The nurses, physios, therapy support workers, and doctors on the team will look after you.

4. Rehabilitation after surgery

You will come back to RJAH for a 5-day stay between 5 and 8 weeks after your operation. You'll stay in a self-catering cottage, and meals will be provided. You'll be staying with other veterans who are on the programme too.

You will follow a rehab plan including different activities.

Some activities will be:

- done on your own
- done with a small group of other veterans

You will have time in:

- the gym
- the hydrotherapy pool

6. Support through the programme

You will have support for 12 months after your surgery. Lt Col Meyer and his team will see you 12 months after your surgery.

At these visits, we will ask how you are doing and take some clinical measurements.

Extra support

RJAH Veterans Hub will support you through the programme.

The PREP team

Lt. Col Meyer leads the veterans PREP rehab programme team. The team is made up of:



Funding

The Veterans' PREP Programme is funded by the Headley Court Charity. Without the funding from the charity this programme would not be possible. Taking part in this programme will help us to understand what rehab works best and what helps veterans.

Evaluating PREP Programme

Alongside the Veterans PREP programme, there is a research study, 'Evaluating PREP', which is evaluating whether veterans on the PREP programme can improve outcomes following their knee surgery.

If you need a knee replacement, and are taking part in the Veterans PREP programme you will have the opportunity to decide if you want to join in the evaluation as well. A member of the research team will be available to discuss this with you at your hospital appointment.

If you require a special edition of this leaflet

This leaflet is available in large print. Arrangements can also be made on request for it to be explained in your preferred language. Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) email: rjah.pals.office@nhs.net

Feedback

Tell us what you think of our patient information leaflet. Please send your comments to the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) email: rjah.pals.office@nhs.net

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